

Submitter: Annabelle Morgan
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure: SB1593

Senator Mark Meek, Chairman, Senate Revenue and Finance Committee,
Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee, My name is Annabelle Morgan and I live in Washington County with forestland in Lincoln County and I am submitting testimony in opposite to SB 1593. As you are aware, knowledge is the key to making informed decisions and only comes through personal experience and fact-based education beginning as a child and developing through adulthood. Funded through Forest Harvest Tax Revenue and no general funds, OFRI supports the forest industry, the backbone of rural communities and income for over 60,000 family jobs, and funds educational materials and programs especially important as the chasm between rural and urban knowledge of science based management of our natural resources grows. Most public educators have neither background nor funding to teach Natural Resource classes. OFRI fulfills that role. It partners with OSU Forestry Research projects, develops and distributes colorful, factual educational materials and lesson plans, and has conducted workshops for 1000 teachers on maintaining sustainable, healthy forests and environment and publishing the guidelines required now by the Private Forest Accord, so woodland owners can figure out how to implement these on their forestlands. It finances buses for outdoor education for students, partners with OSU Extension funding adult workshops, including over 20 Tree School Online Webinars on fire prevention and help if impact by fire educate public and forest owners. on how to mitigate fire hazards in rural and urban areas to maintain Oregon's healthy environment. OFRI is an essential program for present and future generations, especially now when they are an the sole program working with ODF to disseminate and educate Forest Owners about the new rules the Private Forest Accord demands and for which ODF have oversight. They are updating essential factual, instructive materials to distribute to both public and landowners. I am also opposed to this bill as it eliminates the OLPF funding and adds a greater tax burden on small forestland owners even though most fires are on Forest Service or other public lands by increasing their Harvest Taxes by 165-265% when we are already struggling due to mills having closed which increases trucking costs and a lack of available truckers and local mills, and mills often limit loads/day. Taxing high cost logging jobs creates less incentives for reducing fire mitigation work and can impact water quality. The PFA has already diminished the acres of harvestable timber even for those on non-fish bearing streams. Tree farmers will have to have shorter rotations and this will impact carbon sequestration and the environment as a whole. Also, all landowner costs for large fires will be paid by surcharges on minimum, improved lots, and acreage assessment and there's no guarantee that the money will be spent for fire protection. All these factors: having small areas at any one time

which are harvestable plus increasing costs of thinning to keep fire hazards down, road maintenance, site prep, replanting, make it difficult enough to keep small family tracts afloat, able to strive for longer rotations which would increase carbon sequestration. The Severance and harvest tax increases and timelines for these do not work for ODF besides being prohibitive; many tree farms will be unable to maintain their family farms and will seek for there more lucrative uses of their lands. There is no evidence for any one certification system being superior to another, so differing of tax amounts based on ownership size should not be a factor.